

## TRIBUTE TO JAMES LEADER

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 6, 2007*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to James Leader, a dedicated Foreign Service Officer who has done so much to promote and strengthen relations between the United States and the Republic of Sri Lanka. He has been an example of the best of our Foreign Service—passionate, knowledgeable, and effective.

Jim served at the American Embassy in Colombo from 1970–72 and as a Desk Officer for Sri Lanka in the Department of State from 1973–77. He maintained contact with many Sri Lankans and Americans interested in Sri Lankan affairs and recognized the need to form an organization to nurture and build on those relationships. To meet that need, in 1994, Jim teamed up with Gil Shinbaum to launch the auspiciously-named Serendipity Group.

The Serendipity Group is an organization of former American Ambassadors and officials who lived in Sri Lanka and retain a strong interest in Sri Lankan affairs. My father, who served as an Ambassador to Sri Lanka between 1973–76, and my mother were part of this group, and I witnessed the commitment, shared by all its members, to building stronger ties between the United States and Sri Lanka.

Jim and his wife, Carillon, invited Group members to their home for informal discussions and activities. He recruited speakers to Serendipity Group forums and fostered conversation between Sri Lankan Ambassadors to the United States, U.S. Ambassadors to Colombo, scholars, writers, and others who shared his passion for Sri Lankan-American interests.

In addition to his diplomatic efforts, Jim deserves recognition for his philanthropic work. In 2004, when Sri Lanka was devastated by the tsunami, he mobilized resources for a significant relief donation.

In all, James Leader's initiative in founding the Serendipity Group, and his inspired leadership, have made an important contribution to the relationship between the United States and the Republic of Sri Lanka. As he steps down as leader of the Group, I congratulate him on his years of service, both in public and private life, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS  
MONTH**HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 6, 2007*

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, domestic violence is a widespread tragedy that indiscriminately affects families of all races and classes. It is a serious crime that has no social barriers.

Thanks to the leadership of the women in Congress, this body has made great strides in addressing many issues surrounding domestic violence.

For example, The Violence Against Women Act of 1994, helped dispel the myth that living

with domestic violence was a lifestyle choice of the victim. This landmark legislation directly impacted federal and state laws which today recognize domestic violence as a crime for which the abuser, not the victim, is responsible.

Unfortunately, much more still needs to be done to help victims become survivors.

For example, studies estimate that in the United States close to one-third of women will be physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend in their lifetime.

Credible research has also found that the inability to financially support themselves and their children is a critical factor contributing to one staying in an abusive relationship.

Without the ability to be self-sufficient, many survivors are left with the terrifying choice of staying with their abuser or being unable to provide for themselves and their children.

While many states, including my home state of California, have taken action to help survivors retain their financial independence, the job protections offered by state laws vary dramatically.

For example, in 21 states when a survivor is forced to quit a job due to the abuse, she or he is not eligible for unemployment benefits.

And only nine states protect a survivor's job if they are attacked by a partner or spouse and need time off to find a safe place to live.

These discrepancies in state laws often determine whether a person will continue to be a victim of abuse or a survivor.

On October 31, I, together with Representative POE from Texas, introduced three bills to help victims of domestic violence become survivors regardless of where in the country they live.

Our bills address three key economic factors that prevent many survivors from leaving an abusive relationship by providing victims of abuse with the employment protections and the increased economic stability they need to leave an abuser.

The three bills are: The Job Protection for Survivors Act, the Insurance Non-Discrimination for Survivors Act, and the Unemployment Insurance for Survivors Act.

The Job Protection for Survivors Act will allow survivors of domestic violence, without the fear of losing their jobs, to take limited leave from work to make necessary court appearances, and get help with safety planning. Employees will also have job protection if they ask for reasonable safety modifications in the workplace.

The Insurance Non-Discrimination Act for Survivors will prohibit employers or insurance providers from basing hiring or coverage decisions on an individual's history of abuse. This will help address the fear many have of seeking help because they know companies may use documents such as police records to drop or reject their insurance coverage.

The third bill, the Unemployment Insurance for Survivors Act, guarantees that survivors are eligible for unemployment benefits. Current Federal law remains inadequate in ensuring survivors have the resources they need while seeking new employment and a safe place to live.

Madam Speaker, for many this package of bills can literally make the difference between life and death.

I want to thank the many dedicated advocates who labor every day to end domestic vi-

olence for their support of these bills. I have worked closely with them for many years, and their input and expertise has been invaluable in crafting these measures.

I also thank Representative POE for his co-sponsorship and I look forward to working with him to pass these bills.

Madam Speaker, violence in America's families has a devastating effect not only on the target of the abuse but on the family unit. It is especially damaging to the children who suffer emotionally or are themselves the target of physical abuse.

I urge my colleagues to join me and Congressman POE and co-sponsor the Job Protection for Survivors Act, the Insurance Non-Discrimination for Survivors Act, and the Unemployment Insurance for Survivors Act to empower survivors against the violence in their lives.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 6, 2007*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, on November 5, I was detained in my district due to travel delays, and missed the votes on passage of the Motion to Close Portions of the Conference to H.R. 3222, the FY08 Department of Defense Appropriations Conference; H.R. 513, the National Heroes Credit Protection Act; and H. Res. 744, recognizing the contributions of Native American veterans and calling upon the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of the United States to observe a day in honor of Native American veterans. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on passage of all three bills.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PAULA  
FRANCIS**HON. JON C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 6, 2007*

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Paula Francis who has served Las Vegas as a Senior Television Anchor for over 25 years.

Ms. Paula Francis graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and in 1985 moved to Las Vegas as the evening news anchor at KTNV-TV. In 1990 she joined KLAS-TV as the evening news anchor alongside friend and colleague Gary Waddell.

In addition to her professional career, Ms. Francis has continually given back to the community. She serves on the board of the Shade Tree Shelter for Homeless Women and Children, the Community Advisory Board for the Assistance League, and the Southern Nevada Chapter of International Women's Forum. She also contributes her time by reading to students during Nevada Reading Week. She also speaks to individuals and organizations about health issues including her campaign to educate women about breast cancer awareness called "Buddy Check 8".

Ms. Francis has received numerous awards for her time spent in Southern Nevada. She